

Parte III: Manipulação da informação

Novos alvos terapêuticos

É possível fazer uma classificação molecular dos tumores e correlacionar com prognóstico.

E agora?

Inhibition of FLT3 in MLL: Validation of a therapeutic target identified by gene expression based classification

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Summary

We recently found that MLL-rearranged acute lymphoblastic leukemias (MLL) have a unique gene expression profile including high level expression of the receptor tyrosine kinase FLT3. We hypothesized that FLT3 might be a therapeutic target in MLL and found that 5 of 30 MLLs contain mutations in the activation loop of FLT3 that result in constitutive activation. Three are a newly described deletion of I836 and the others are D835 mutations. The recently described FLT3 inhibitor PKC412 proved cytotoxic to Ba/F3 cells dependent upon activated FLT3 containing either mutation. PKC412 is also differentially cytotoxic to leukemia cells with MLL translocations and FLT3 that is activated by either overexpression of the wild-type receptor or mutation. Finally, we developed a mouse model of MLL and used bioluminescent imaging to determine that PKC412 is active against MLL *in vivo*.

Introduction

Gene expression profiles of neoplastic cells are beginning to provide important biological and clinical insights. Recent analyses of multiple different cancers have identified gene expression differences between tumors with similar histologic characteristics yet heterogeneous clinical behavior (Alizadeh et al., 2000; Armstrong et al., 2002; Bhattacharjee et al., 2001; Perou et al., 2000; Singh et al., 2002; Yeoh et al., 2002). Also, retrospective studies have demonstrated the potential for gene expression based prediction of response to therapy (Pomeroy et al., 2002; Shipp et al., 2002; van't Veer et al., 2002). These studies provide evidence that tumor-intrinsic biological heterogeneity is at least partly responsible for the differing clinical responses to therapy and suggest that a refined molecular classification of cancer will lead to the development of tailored therapeutic regimens. The most exciting, and yet unrealized, promise of cancer genomics is the identification of new, unanticipated therapeutic targets. Development of therapeutic strategies directed toward

highly specific targets may prove more effective and perhaps less toxic than conventional chemotherapy.

The identification of non-random chromosomal translocations in leukemia provides a prominent example of how molecular characterization of cancer can lead to a better understanding of tumorigenesis and new therapeutic approaches (Rowley, 1998). Children diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukemia (ALL) that harbors a t(9;22), and those with rearrangements of the Mixed Lineage Leukemia (MLL) gene on chromosome 11q23, have a significantly worse prognosis than other patients with ALL (Chen et al., 1993; Pui et al., 1990, 1991). This knowledge prompted the development of a tailored chemotherapeutic approach for patients with ALL harboring a t(9;22) (Arico et al., 2000). More importantly, the detailed understanding of the molecular mechanisms of the BCR-ABL tyrosine kinase encoded by the t(9;22) has resulted in the development of an oncogene-targeted therapy using the tyrosine kinase inhibitor ST1571 (Druker et al., 2001a). While the protein products of other chromosomal translocations also represent rational targets,

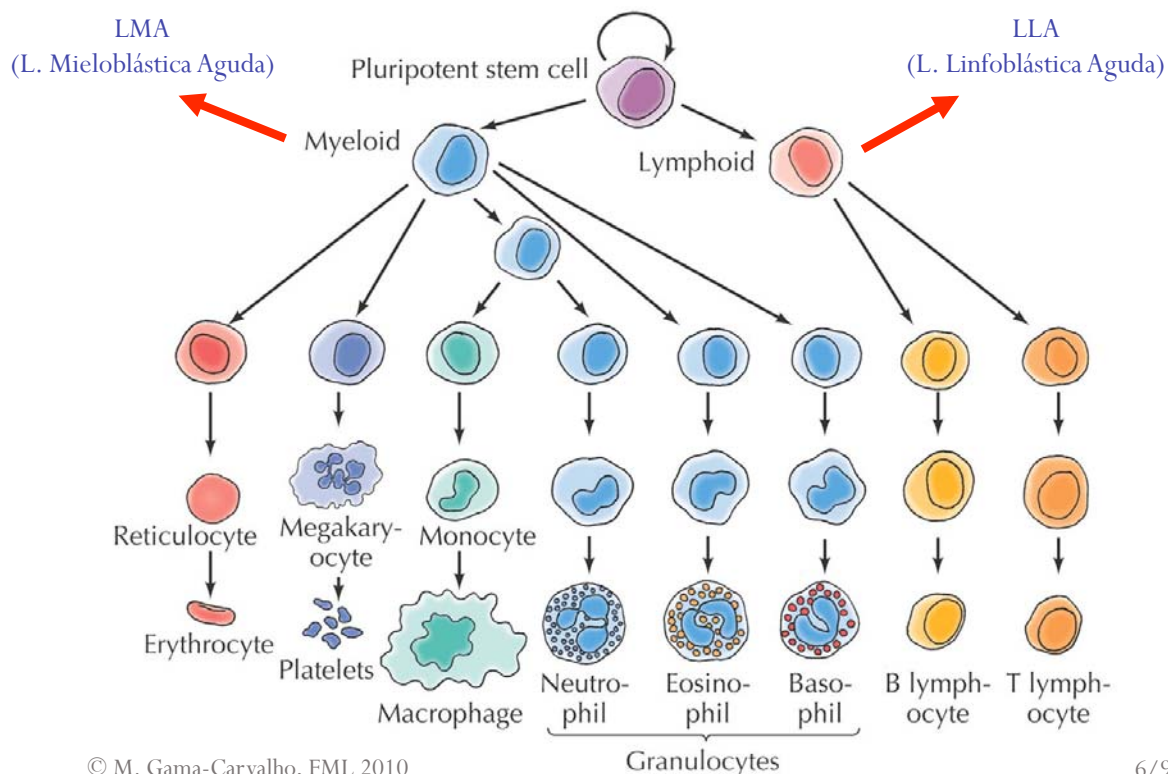
SIGNIFICANCE

Gene expression profiles of cancer cells promise to more accurately define diseases, predict response to therapy, and ultimately identify new therapeutic targets. Recent gene expression studies of leukemias have shown that recurrent chromosomal translocations found in leukemic cells specify unique diseases. This provides the opportunity to test specifically expressed proteins as new therapeutic targets in these diseases. FLT3 is highly expressed in MLL-rearranged acute lymphoblastic leukemias (MLL) compared to other acute leukemias. Here, we validate FLT3 as a therapeutic target in MLL and show that FLT3 inhibitors are active against a mouse model of the disease. This represents the validation of a therapeutic target identified by gene expression analysis and mandates the development of clinical trials of FLT3 inhibitors in this chemotherapy-resistant leukemia.

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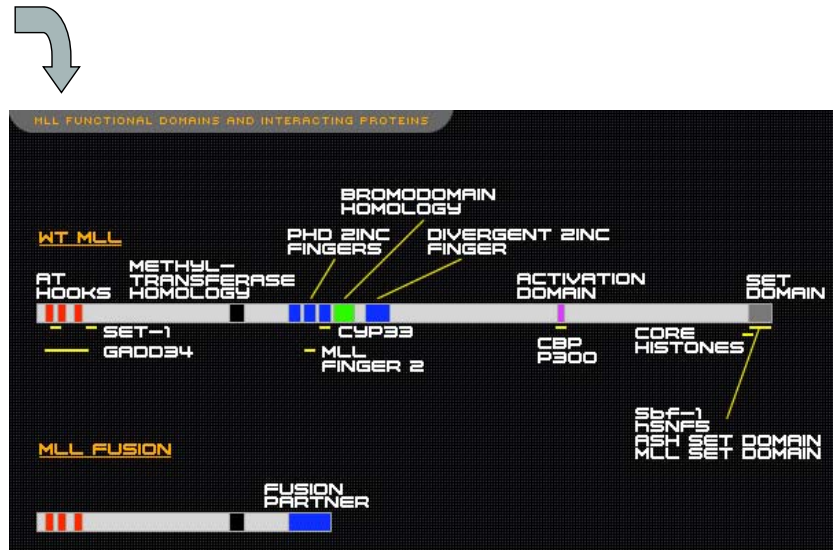
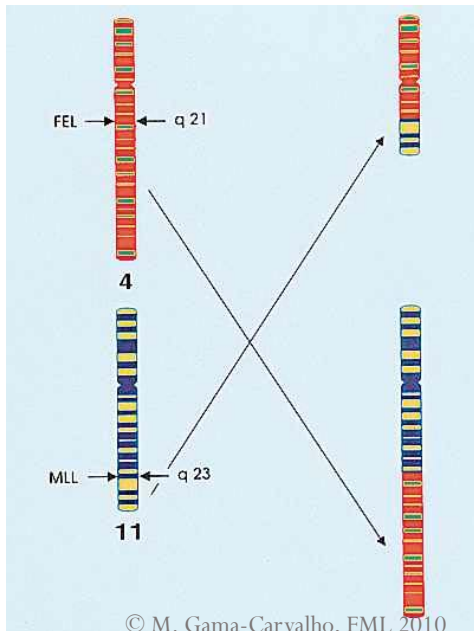
Leucémias agudas :



LLA: subgrupo de mau prognóstico

Translocação gene MLL
(cromosoma 11)

- - regula estrutura da cromatina
- importante na regulação de genes envolvidos na hematopoiese

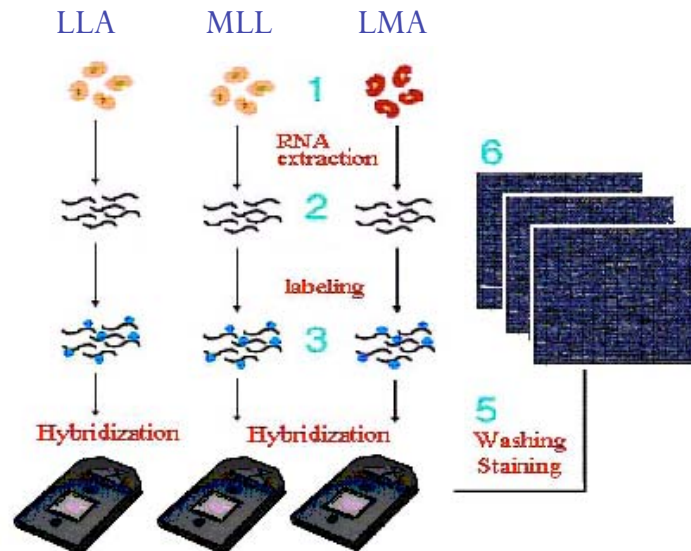


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Como é que esta translocação pode resultar numa leucemia?

- Perda de um gene chave do processo de hematopoiese
- Alteração da transcrição de genes alvos
 - Bloqueio de processo de diferenciação
 - Proliferação indevida das células

Investigadores do Dana Farber Cancer Institute, Boston, colocaram a hipótese de se tratar não de um subtipo de LLA mas de uma leucemia aguda distinta. Para testar esta ideia compararam o perfil de expressão génica de células obtidas de doentes com LLA “clássica”, de doentes com LLA com translocação do gene MLL e de doentes com LMA usando microarrays com uma grande bateria de genes (~12.600)



Nº doentes analisado: 20

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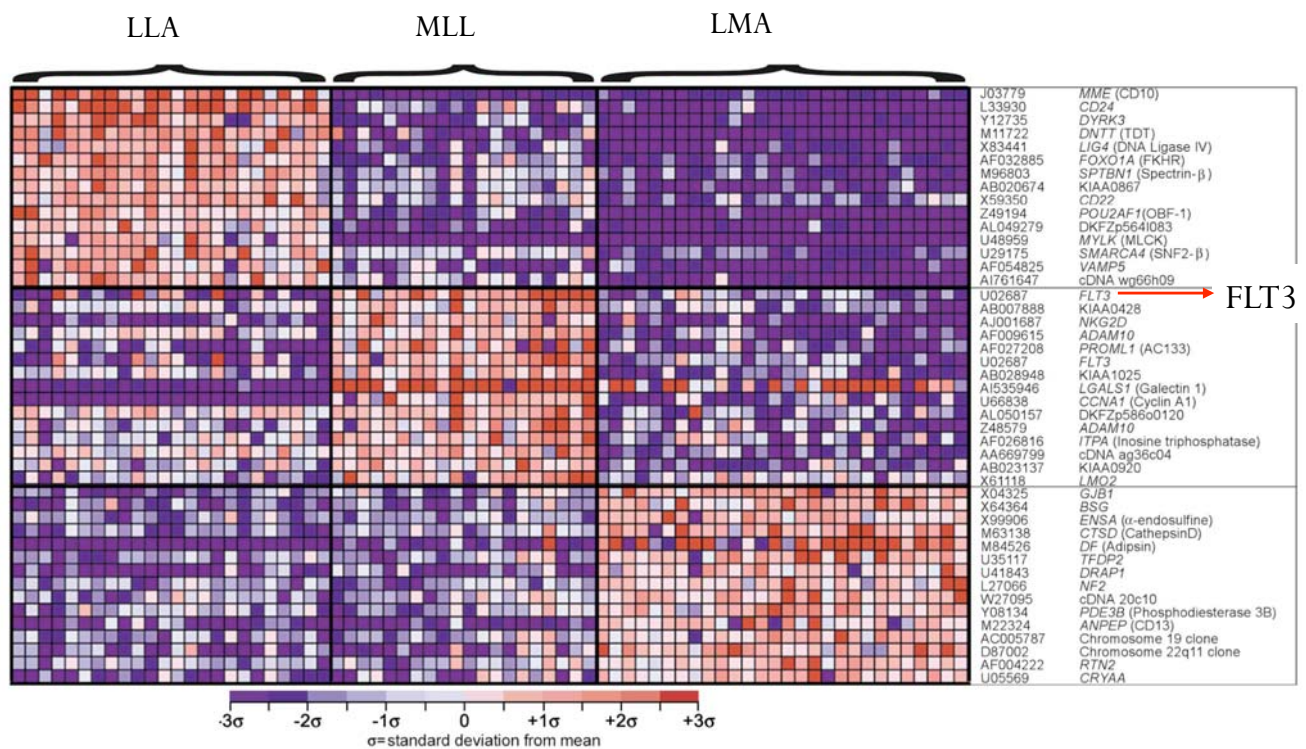
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Algumas horas de trabalho depois ...

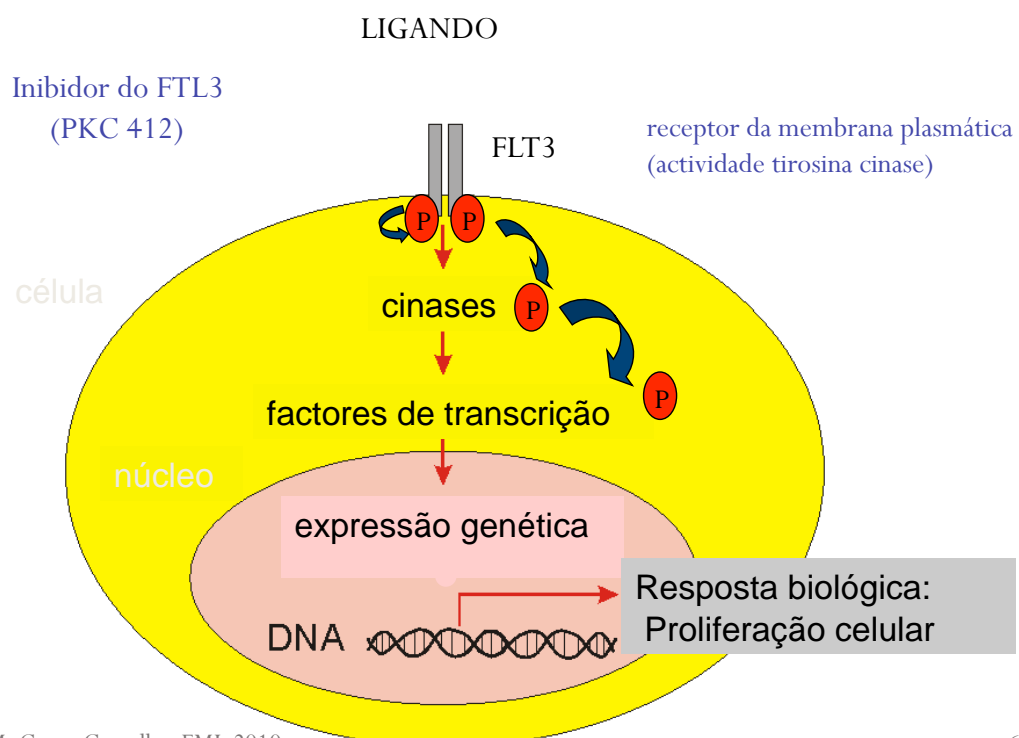
- Extração de RNA (57 amostras)
- Avaliar quantidade e integridade do RNA
- Marcação do RNA com fluorescência
- Avaliar integridade do RNA e marcação
- Preparar hibridação
- Hibridação (57 microarrays)
- Lavagem
- Scanning
- Tratamento dos dados

Análise comparativa dos perfis de expressão génica



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“Transdução” de sinal via FLT3



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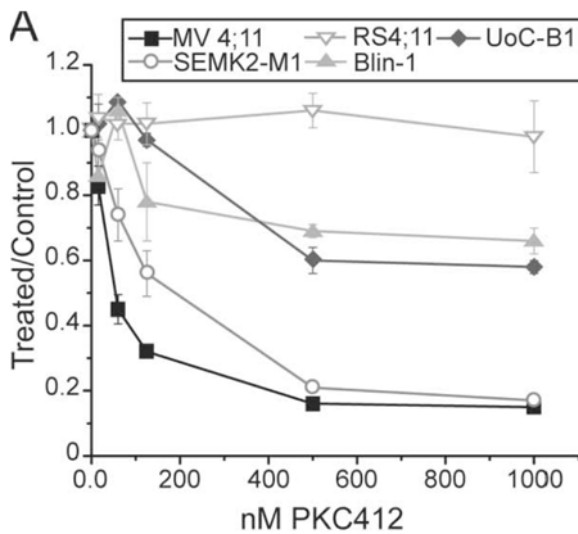
Estes resultados identificam o gene FLT3 como fundamental na progressão do cancro?

- Não... Pode ser uma consequência secundária das alterações sofridas pela célula sem efeitos significativos no seu fenótipo
- É preciso demonstrar experimentalmente o papel do FLT3 nestas células inibindo a sua função!

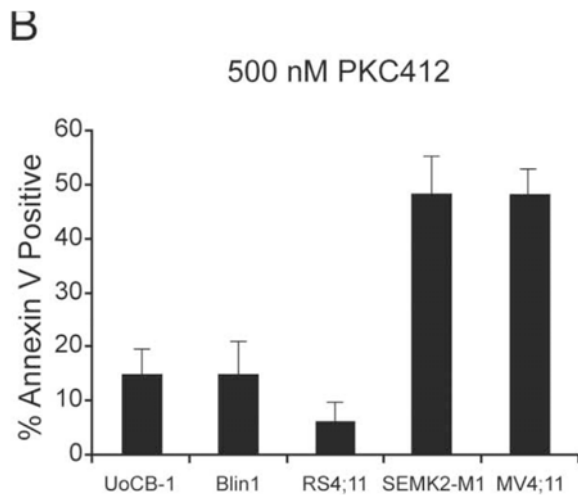
Os investigadores do DFCI resolveram testar inicialmente se o PKC 412 reduzia eficazmente a proliferação celular de células tumorais.

- Linhas celulares:
 - derivadas de leucemia MLL com expressão aumentada de FLT3: SEMK2 e MV4
 - que não expressam FLT3: RSA, UoC, Blin-1
- Células tratadas com:
 - PKC 412
 - solvente do fármaco
- Analisaram a viabilidade celular:
 - Teste de proliferação (Figura 3A)
 - Teste de morte celular (Figura 3B)
- Análisaram a inibição do FLT3 pelo PKC 412
 - *Western blotting* – detecção da forma fosforilada (Figura 3C)

Teste de Proliferação

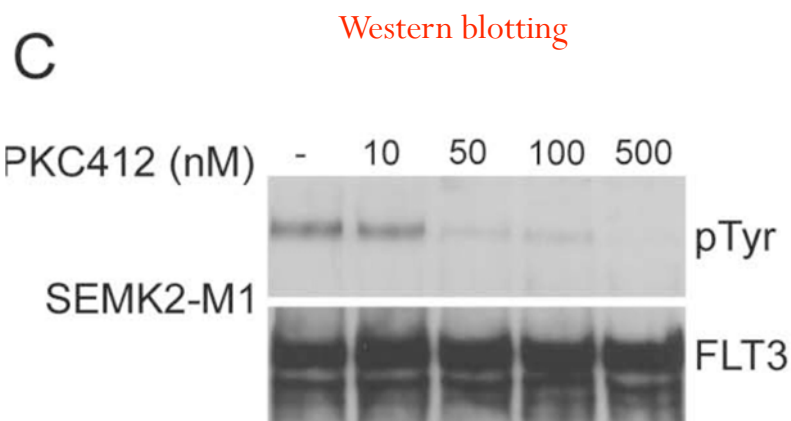


Teste de Morte Celular



Como interpreta os resultados?

- A inibição do FLT3 provoca uma redução da proliferação e aumento da apoptose de células leucémicas MLL que expressam níveis elevados deste gene, mas não nos outros tipos celulares
- Os resultados apoiam a hipótese de que o FLT3 tem um papel importante na progressão deste tipo de tumor



Como interpreta os resultados?

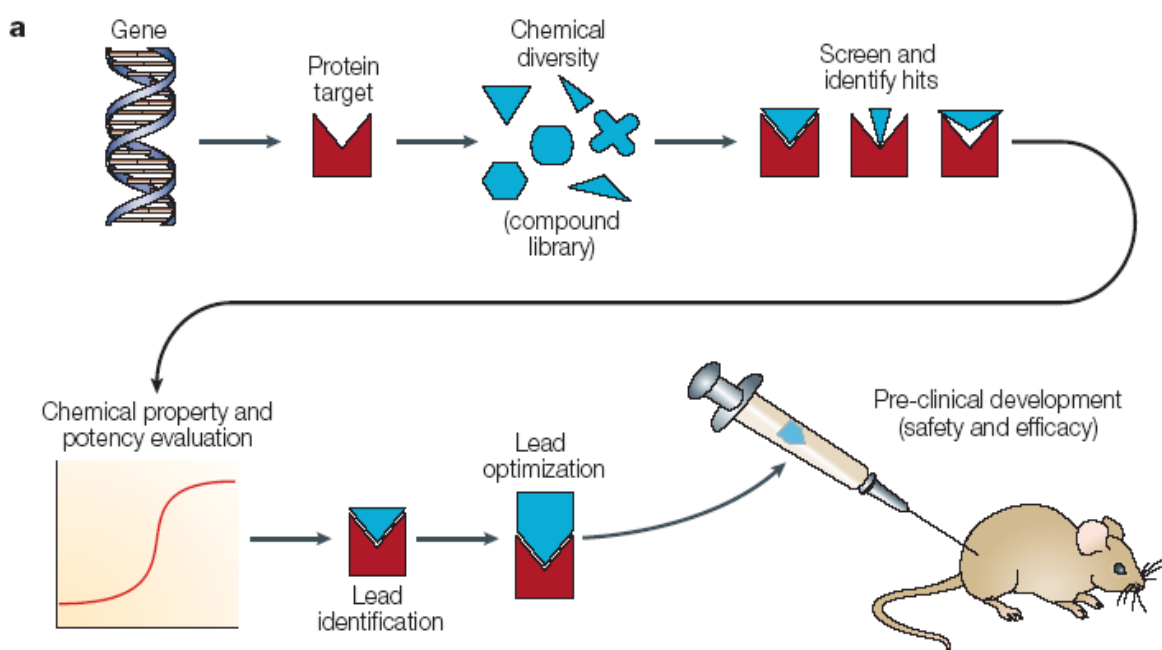
- Os resultados mostram que o inibidor actua directamente sobre a actividade cinásica do FLT3
- O conjunto dos dados sugerem que a inibição directa do FLT3 é capaz de provocar a morte específica destas células tumorais e que o inibidor PKC412 pode ser eficaz no tratamento das leucemias de tipo MLL.

E agora?

Passamos a administrar este inibidor aos doentes?

- Não! Estes resultados apenas demonstram o potencial da droga em cultura de células.
- Antes de chegar à prática clínica qualquer medicamento tem de passar por um processo de ensaios complexo em que se incluem estudos em modelos animais para avaliar interacções específicas ao nível do organismo.
- Estas incluem dosagem, administração, absorção, toxicidade, excreção, etc, todas elas fundamentais para o sucesso de um medicamento.

Desenvolvimento de novos fármacos

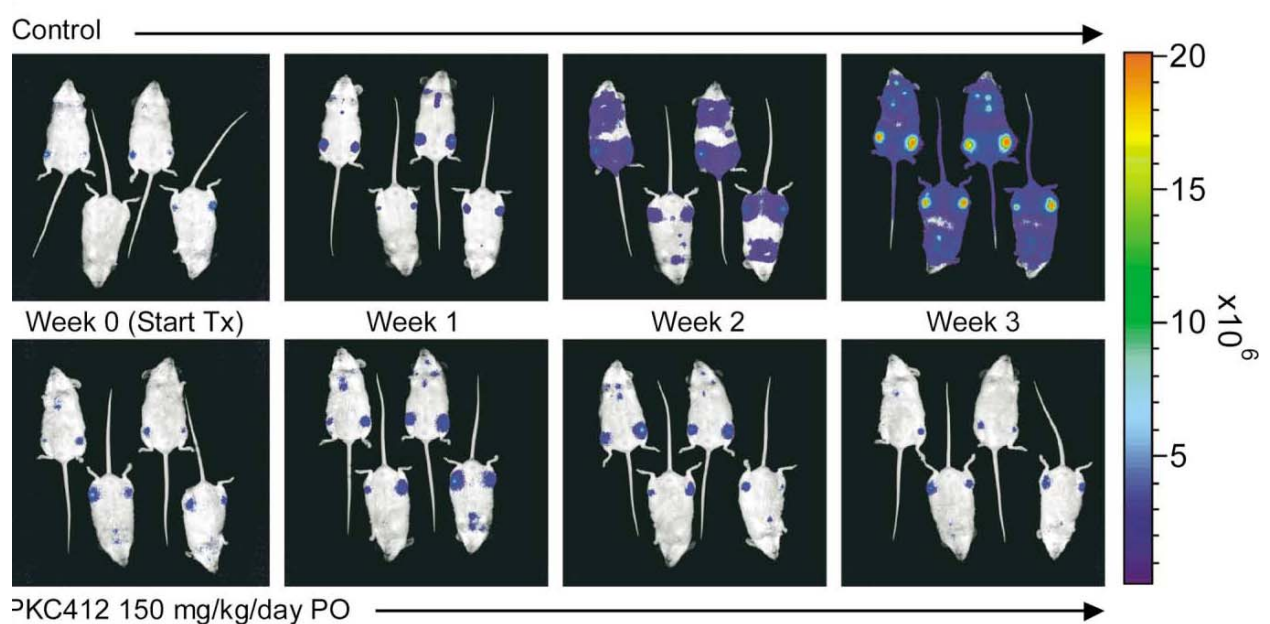


Finalmente, os investigadores usaram um modelo mais robusto para testar a eficácia de PKC 412 no tratamento de células de leucemia MLL. Para tal, a linha celular SEMK2 foi tornada fluorescente por expressão de GFP (Green Fluorescent Protein) e injectada em ratinhos. As células tumorais foram subsequentemente seguidas *in vivo* por detecção de fluorescência e a sua proliferação comparada entre animais tratados com PKC412 e controlos expostos somente ao solvente.

Deste modo:

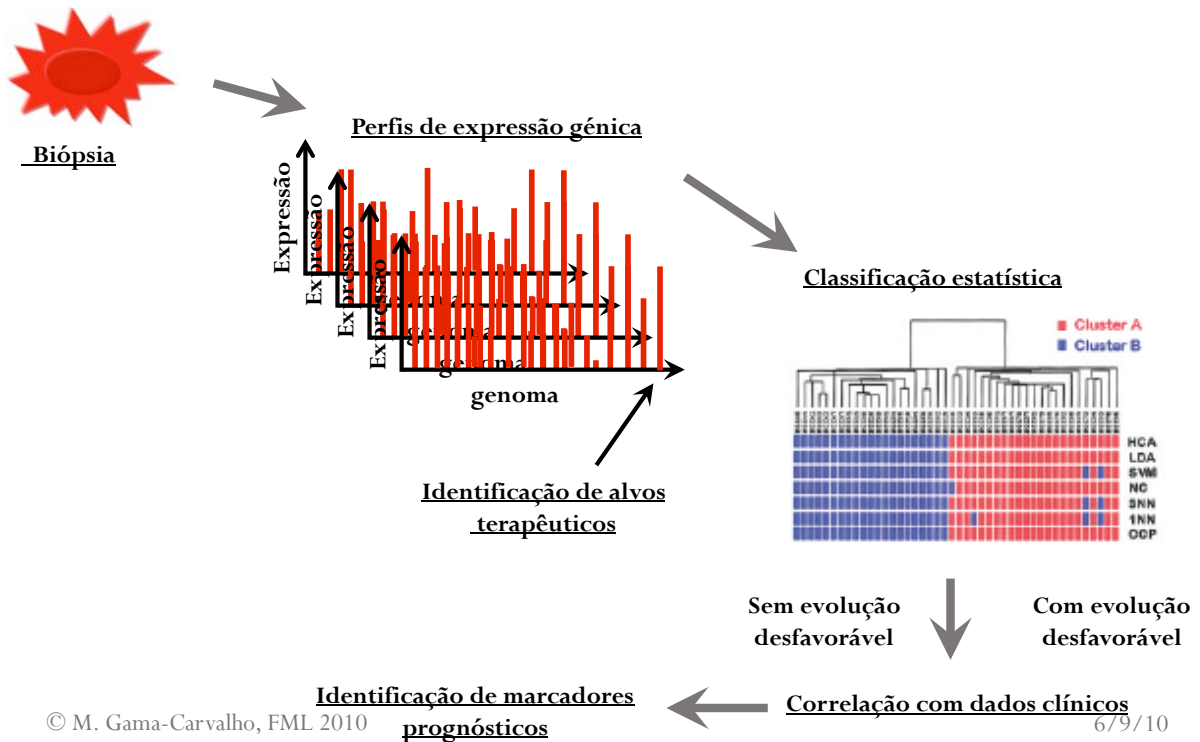
Analizou-se a capacidade destas células colonizarem os órgãos do receptor na presença e ausência de PKC412

Resultados:

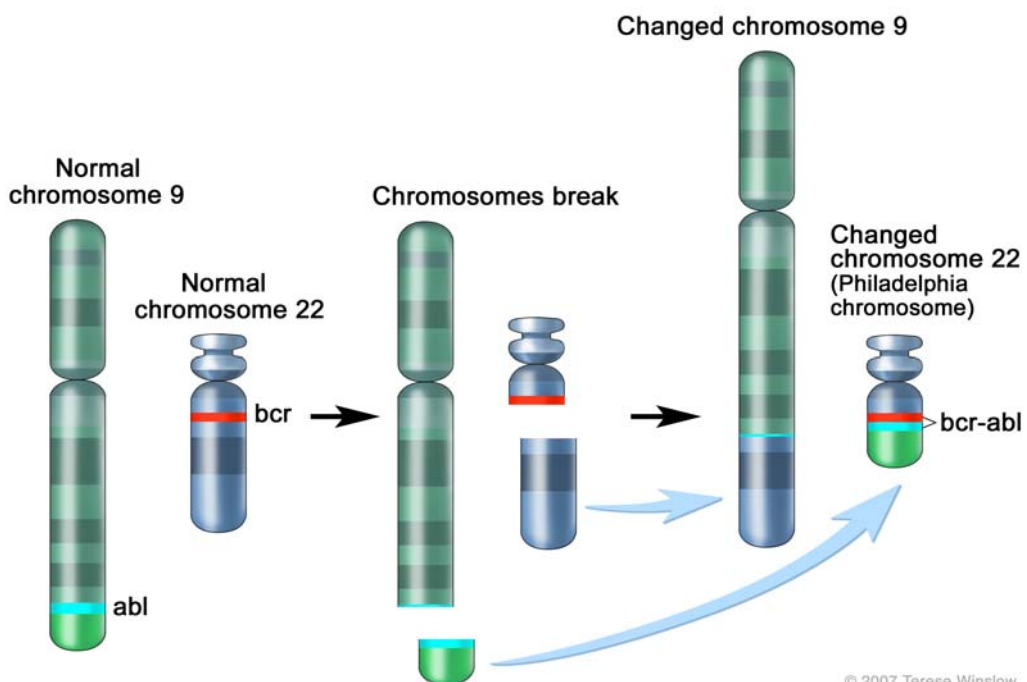


Conclusão:

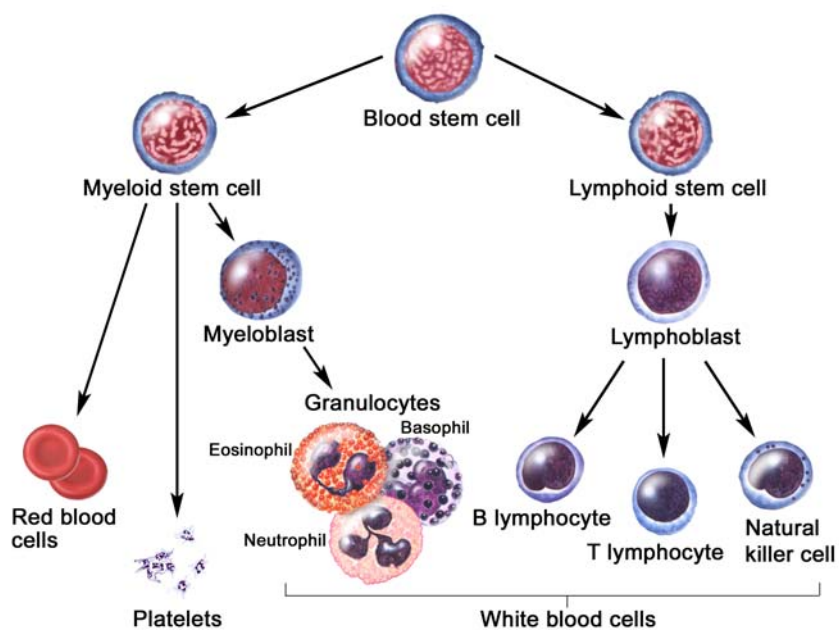
Medicina preditiva, preventiva e personalizada



Uma história de sucesso no design de terapêuticas dirigidas: leucemia mielóide crónica



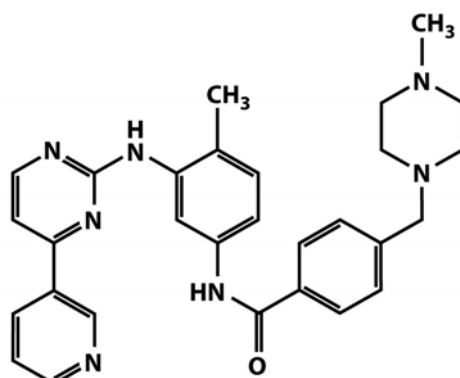
A proteína de fusão Bcr-Abl altera promove a proliferação excessiva da linhagem granulocítica



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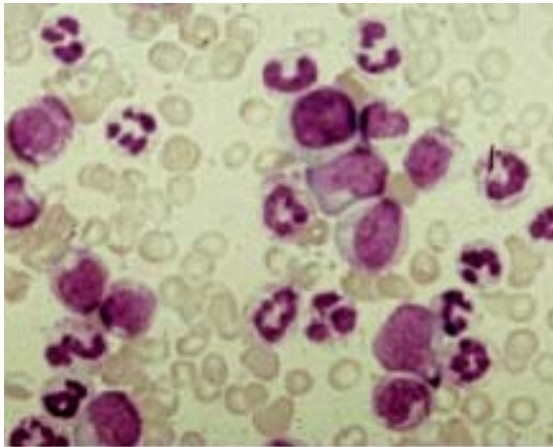
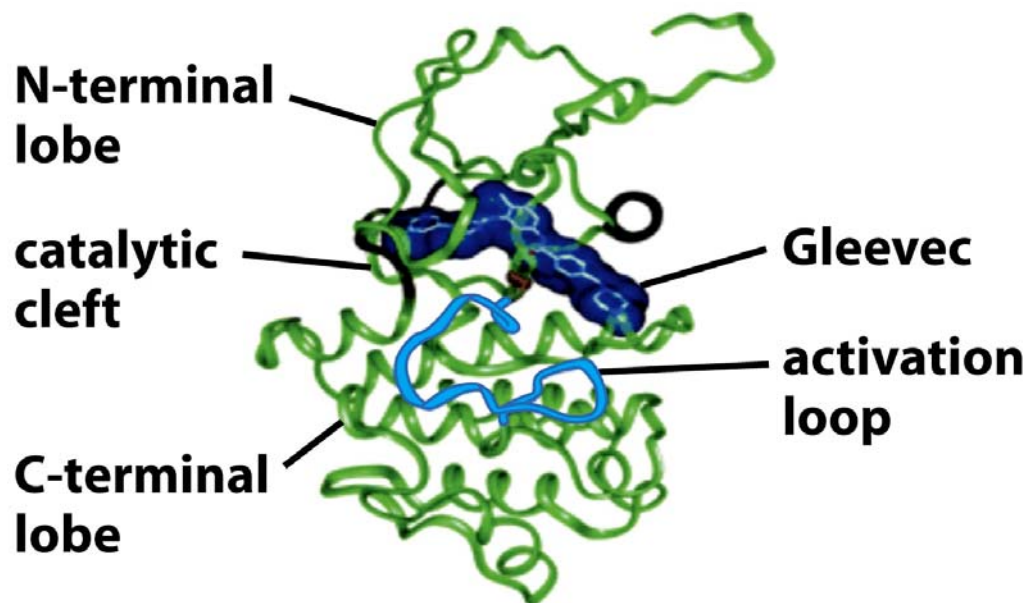
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Gleevec®
(imatinib mesylate)

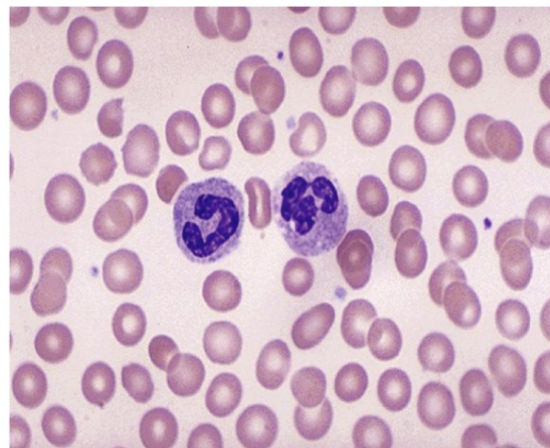
O Gleevec inibe as cinases de tirosina Abl e c-kit



before treatment

Leucemia mielóide crónica (CML)

90% remissão em fases iniciais



after treatment

Tumor gastro-intestinal (GIST)

75% recaída ao fim de 2,5 anos...

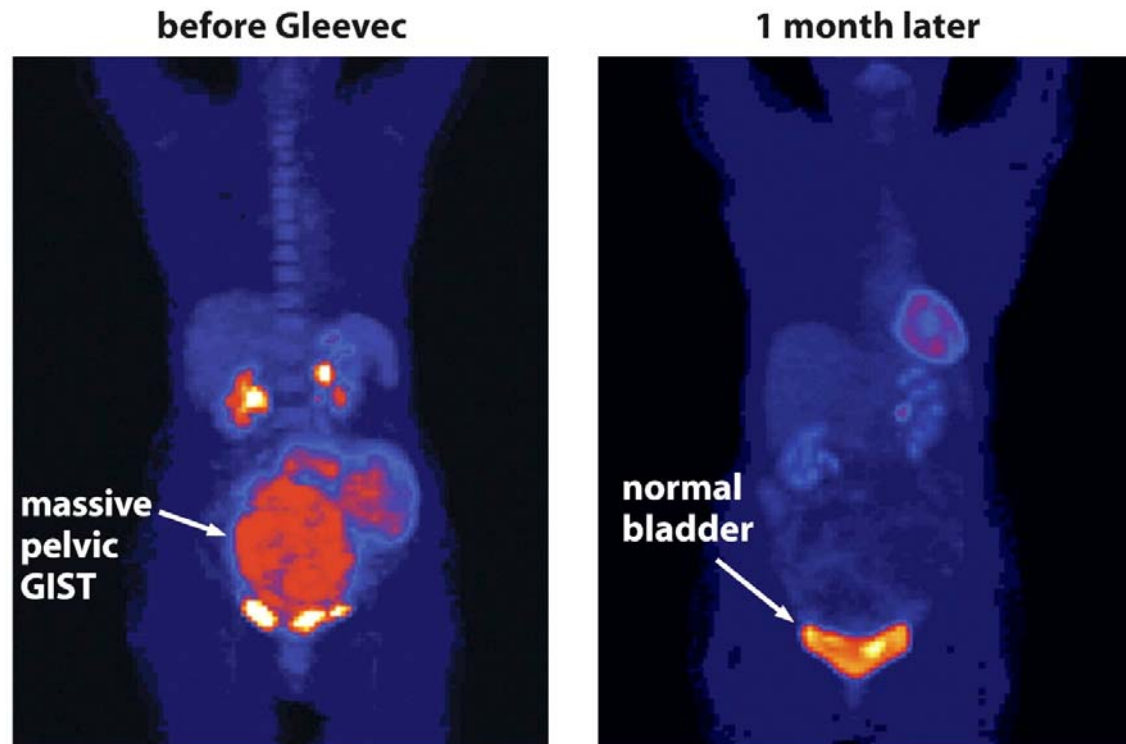
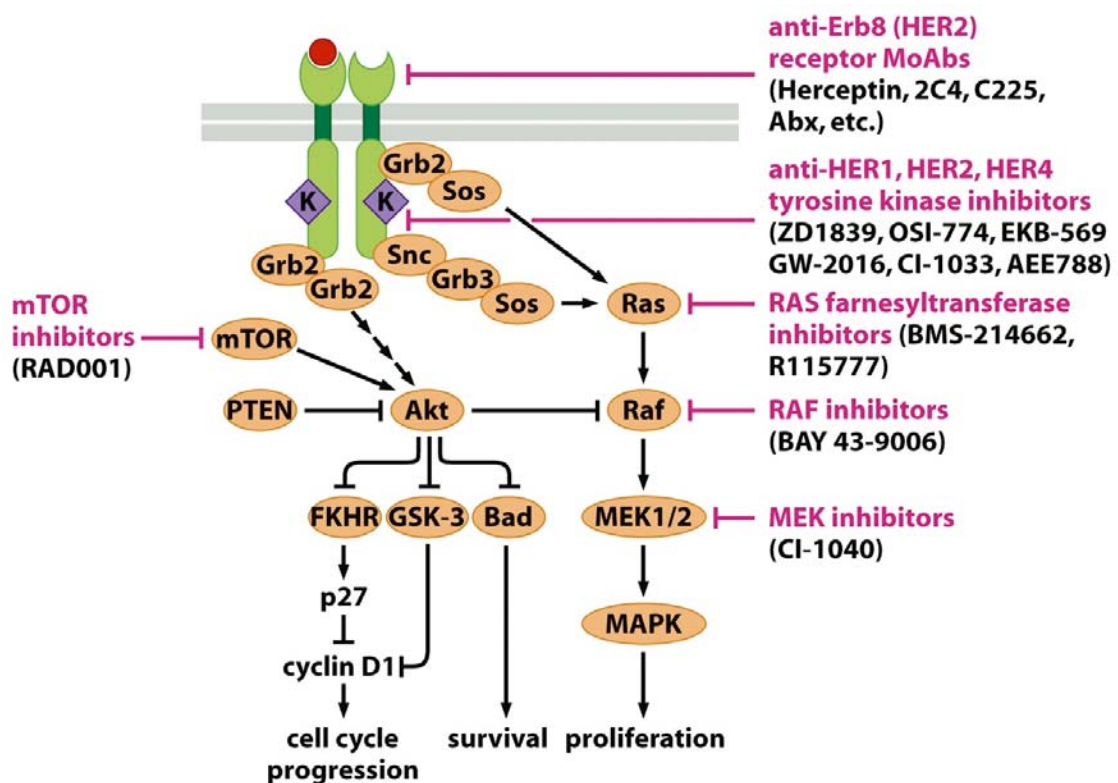


Figure 16.29 *The Biology of Cancer* (© Garland Science 2007)

Vias de sinalização e terapêutica dirigida do cancro



Cancer Cell. 2010 Apr 13;17(4):400-11.

A small-molecule inhibitor of BCL6 kills DLBCL cells in vitro and in vivo.

Cerchietti LC, Ghetu AF, Zhu X, Da Silva GF, Zhong S, Matthews M, Bunting KL, Polo JM, Farès C, Arrowsmith CH, Yang SN, Garcia M, Coop A, Mackerell AD Jr, Privé GG, Melnick A.

Division of Hematology and Medical Oncology, Department of Medicine, Weill Cornell Medical College, Cornell University, New York, NY 10065, USA.

Comment in:

Cancer Cell. 2010 Apr 13;17(4):315-6.

Abstract

The BCL6 transcriptional repressor is the most frequently involved oncogene in diffuse large B cell lymphoma (DLBCL). We combined computer-aided drug design with functional assays to identify low-molecular-weight compounds that bind to the corepressor binding groove of the BCL6 BTB domain. One such compound disrupted BCL6/corepressor complexes in vitro and in vivo, and was observed by X-ray crystallography and NMR to bind the critical site within the BTB groove. This compound could induce expression of BCL6 target genes and kill BCL6-positive DLBCL cell lines. In xenotransplantation experiments, the compound was nontoxic and potently suppressed DLBCL tumors in vivo. The compound also killed primary DLBCLs from human patients. Copyright 2010 Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

A Biologia Molecular tem permitido a identificação de genes com expressão alterada em diferentes tumores que constituem bons alvos terapêuticos mas...

... estaremos dependentes da identificação de inibidores da actividade proteica??